succeed Bonaparte in Italy. As for himself, he was left unhampered by instructions, but three alternatives had suggested themselves to the Directory — that he should either remain in Egypt and complete his colonial organization, or else press on to India and there supplant the English power, or, finally, march straight to Constantinople and attack the Russians. The tone of the despatches was one of anxiety. From earliest times Acre had been the key of Palestine; if Bonaparte should secure it, he would become the arbiter of his own destiny and of the world's. With Palestine, Egypt, and India at his feet, the tricontinental monarchy of his dreams was realizable; or else, in the same case, he could return to Paris with laurels unknown since the crusades, and put the copestone on the nearly completed structure of military domination in France and Europe. To the end of his days he imagined, or represented himself as imagining, that he would have altered the world's career by choosing the part of Oriental conqueror. We may call these notions dreams, or fancies, or visions, or what we will; they were sane conceptions in themselves, although it is not likely that England would have been conquered in the loss of India. She had been vigorous without it; she could have survived even that blow. For the moment the fall of Acre appeared to be an antecedent condition to either of the courses which were in the mind of Bonaparte.

But the siege was not prosperous. The assault and the defense during the attack in March had been alike desperate, and French valor had been futile. A fleet was now on its way from Constantinople to throw additional men and provisions into the town. At the same time Phelippeaux had constructed a new girdle of forts inside the walls, and had barricaded the streets. In the interval, however, the French had brought up some